

# Consequences

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Summary: Detective Sergeant Sally Donovan of New Scotland Yard seemed to believe that actions only had consequences for other people. She was mistaken.

## 1. Chapter 1

Detective Sergeant Sally Donovan of New Scotland Yard seemed to believe that actions only had consequences for other people. She was mistaken.

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Sally Donovan despised the Freak also known as Sherlock Holmes. The man insulted everyone in NSY, tried to show them up, had no care about the victims, and she was positive that he was actually turned on by murders. Today, the Freak had the audacity to bring some crippled bloke he introduced as Doctor John Watson to the crime scene. Of course, the man was left behind when the Freak went running off without a word of explanation to anyone.

The female officer felt rather smug as the compact man with the cane realized that he had been abandoned by the self-proclaimed "consulting detective" and condescendingly strode over to him. She failed to notice that the man stifled his impatience at her appearance or that her earlier rudeness still rankled him.

"You're not his friend," she announced abruptly, further irritating the doctor. "He doesn't have friends. So who are you?"

Her disrespect and lack of professionalism exasperated John Watson; it was excessive and unreasonable, especially as she had instigated the earlier confrontation with Sherlock through her juvenile name-calling. Even so, he kept his voice mild. "I'm nobody. I've just met him."

She leaned forward and replied, "Okay, bit of advice then. Stay away

from that guy."

Keeping his voice calm, he mildly asked "Why?" Anyone who had served with him in Afghanistan would have recognized the quiet warning signs, but this NSY officer apparently was as unobservant as Sherlock claimed.

With a sneer, the woman answered, "You know why he's here? He's not paid or anything. He\_ likes\_ it. He gets off on it. The weirder the crime, the more he gets off. And you know what? One day, just showing up won't be enough. One day, we'll be standing around a body and Sherlock Holmes will be the one who put it there."

Very softly and in a tone that would have caused those under his command to still into attention, John asked, "Why would he do that?" His military company knew that Captain Watson was at his most dangerous when he spoke softly in a calm and measured voice. They also knew that it meant\_ Run! Run! Run! Get out of the way, NOW!\_

The woman scoffed, "'Cause he's a psychopath. Psychopaths get bored." As she finished her declaration, she was surprised that the small and mild-mannered crippled man in front of her suddenly seemed to gain a new stature as he straightened. His eyes glittered with intensity and he seemed to radiate dominance; uncompromising and severe authority.

"What is your name and rank," he demanded curtly.

Somewhat unsettled by the change in the man's attitude, she still drew herself up. "I am Detective Sergeant Sally Donovan" she announced proudly.

"So you're not a licensed physician with a specialty in Psychiatry? No? Then you have documentation that Mr. Holmes was evaluated by a panel of licensed specialists with an agreed upon diagnosis? No? Well, \_Detective Sergeant\_, perhaps you forgot that Mr. Holmes was specifically invited to participate in the investigation of this crime by \_Detective Inspector\_ Lestrade. He told you that when we arrived. Your unprofessional behavior not only insulted a man who was specifically requested to attend, but also deliberately insulted and publicly undermined the man who invited him; your \_superior\_, if I'm not mistaken."

Donovan blinked in surprise at both the cold statements and the idea that she had been caught getting what she thought was a subtle dig in at her boss for his continuing involvement of the Freak. Before she could respond, the somewhat intimidating man in front of her continued.

"Not only was your behavior unprofessional and disrespects the chain of command, but it violates the very laws you are employed to maintain; or does New Scotland Yard no longer enforce the country's defamation laws? Your slander of Mr. Holmes to me, someone you never met before tonight, is a criminal offense." His glare raked her shocked appearance with disdain. "If you were under my command, I would have you before a tribunal for gross insubordination and conduct unbecoming an officer."

With another cold glare, he turned sharply on his heel, and literally

marched away, leaving her with her mouth open in disbelief. Those who had been watching the confrontation could hear the man muttering "disgrace to law enforcement everywhere" as he left. By the time she recovered, he was several buildings away. She looked around at the officers watching her and sneered, before returning to her duties, but spent quite a bit of time trying to decide how she was going to pay the so-called Doctor back for the public dressing down he had given her. After all, no one could deny that Sherlock Holmes was a Freak and a psychopath.

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Two days later, and the Freak had figured out that the serial killer was a cabby who had forced his victims at gun point to choose between taking one of two pills; one poisoned and one safe. Before he could force the Freak to take one, he had been shot and killed. The shooter hadn't been found. She was wading through a pile of paperwork at her desk when her boss called.

"Donovan," Lestrade called from his office door, "get in here." He then turned and returned to his spot behind his desk.

She blinked in surprise at his less than courteous demand. Usually DI Lestrade was polite with the team, so this was peculiar behavior. She entered his office and closed the door at his order. Now she was a bit worried. He rarely closed the door to his office.

"How many times have I asked you to stop calling Sherlock Holmes a freak," he snapped as soon as she closed the door. "How many times have I asked that you stop insulting him?"

"The Freak? He's a danger..." she began.

To her shock, he slammed his hand down on his desk. "Enough!" She managed not to take a step back from her obviously livid boss. "You just couldn't behave, could you? You just couldn't be a professional? No, not only did you insult a man I personally asked to assist us, you had to turn on the colleague he brought. Well, congratulations, you've finally done it."

Donovan blinked. "Sir?"

He indicated some papers on his desk. "This is an official complaint from Dr. John Watson, formerly Captain Watson of the RAMC, detailing your unprofessional conduct and defamatory comments regarding Sherlock Holmes. How many times have I said to leave him alone? But no, you had to take his ability to observe better than the majority of the Yard as a personal insult and then engaged in petty school yard bullying and name-calling. If you wanted to bring yourself to the attention of the Superintendent, congratulations, you've done it. Internal Affairs is investigating, but as you apparently very publicly slandered Holmes in front of multiple witnesses, to a decorated war hero with a sterling reputation, this is going to be a black mark in your file. If Watson or Holmes file charges for defamation, it could end your career."

He shook his head at the Sergeant Detective. "And I have just been reamed by my boss for not reining in your improper conduct earlier. The complaint demonstrates that you're so used to calling Sherlock a "freak" that you don't even think about it twice, and you did it

again as soon as I mentioned his name a moment ago. No one wants an unprincipled officer in the field who can't be trusted to act calmly and professionally and has a frankly appalling attitude."

He took a deep breath. "Until Internal Affairs completes their investigation, you are on desk duty. You will have no contact with Sherlock Holmes or Doctor John Watson. You are dismissed, Donovan."

The woman stared at him in shock before she gathered her few remaining wits and left his office. She made her way back to her desk, sneering at the looks her colleagues were giving her. Obviously Lestrade's voice had been heard through the thin office walls. Sitting down, she tried to understand how trying to warn someone against an obvious psychopath could have come to this. It wasn't fair! And that crippled little man was a war hero? She doubted it; it was probably one of the Freak's charades. Internal Affairs would find the truth. They would find her blameless. They had to, didn't they?

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## 2. Chapter 2 - The Aftermath

**\*\*Sherlock Holmes\*\*** was having a perplexing week. His new flat mate had filed a formal complaint at the Met about Sally Donovan's statements to him. He couldn't understand why. Yes, she had called him names, but others had done that his entire life and no one had ever commented. Besides, her remarks had given him the opportunity to point out she was wearing Anderson's deodorant and both she and Anderson had been embarrassed.

But why would John Watson care that a woman he didn't know had insulted Sherlock? He was frequently called a freak and sometimes a monster because he stayed away from the emotional aspects of life. He was used to it.

Now they were both going to be interviewed by an officer in NSY Internal Affairs and he wasn't sure whether that was going to be helpful at all. What if the Met decided he wasn't allowed at crime scenes anymore? He could put up with being called names if it meant he could alleviate the devastating boredom he frequently felt.

He stared at his flat mate over his steepled fingers, trying to deduce why the man reacted so strongly to Sally's insults.

After several minutes, John looked up from his newspaper at the detective who was studying him. "Do I have something on my face," he asked with a raised eyebrow, "or do you have questions for me?"

Sherlock gazed at him for several more seconds before deciding on a direct approach. "Why," he asked. "Why did you file a complaint about Sally Donovan?"

John folded the paper and leaned forward. "Because her behavior was reprehensible, Sherlock. You were invited by her superior officer to the scene. She deliberately insulted you and by doing so, she insulted Lestrade as well. What she said to you was unprofessional

and inappropriate. But after you left, she was even worse, and basically accused you of being an up-and-coming murderer. That type of vilification is slander. We should be able to hold our law enforcement officers to a higher standard of conduct, not watch them casually break the law and think it's acceptable behavior."

Sherlock frowned at the man opposite him before he finally said in a confused voice, "But John, she was insulting me, not you."

The blonde-haired man shook his head at the other man's confusion. "She had no right to abuse anyone, Sherlock! And especially not a man who's there to help, who doesn't even get compensated for his help and was specifically invited! No one has the right to call you a freak just because they're jealous of your brilliance. It's just plain wrong!"

Sherlock felt a warmth ignite in his chest that flowed throughout his system. Sentiment, he thought and tried to dismiss it, but the warmth refused to be ignored. John barely knew him, but had called his intrusive deductions "brilliant", had chased over rooftops in London with him, had even shot a man for him. Now, he refused to allow Sally Donovan to insult him. It wasâ€|Goodâ€|he decided. Perplexing, but definitely Good.

**\*\*Philip Anderson\*\*** was having a maddening week. His wife was away on one of her frequent trips, but since the Freak's shadow had filed a formal complaint against Sally Donovan, the woman wasn't interested in an amorous interlude, and he was frustrated about that.

He was furious that Holmes' so-called colleague had filed a complaint. Holmes had the audacity to sashay into crime scenes, potentially contaminating the evidence, he insulted the professionals on-site and then came up with unsubstantiated deductions. Anderson was livid that the detective had no formal training and had no intention of gaining any, but expected the educated professionals to prostrate themselves in gratitude to his ridiculous conclusions.

Unfortunately, he didn't witness either of the interactions between Sally and the detective, so he wasn't involved in the investigation by Internal Affairs. He tried to stop the IA Detective for a "hallway chat", but the man refused to discuss the investigation outside of appropriate channels. It was maddening.

**\*\*Greg Lestrade\*\*** was having an embarrassing week. Firstly, he had received notification of Doctor Watson's complaint and that an investigation would be performed. Secondly, Donovan refused to acknowledge that there was anything wrong with her attitude. Then today, he had to start his day in a conference room with Detective Robert Singer of Internal Affairs. Once there, he had to justify why the self-proclaimed "consulting detective" had been invited to crime scenes. The sheer genius of the brusque man was hard to describe, but Lestrade succinctly explained the details that Sherlock found after only a two-minute review of the crime scene in question. The dampness of the coat, the mud spatter on one leg, the status of her jewelry all led to the genius' interpretation of what happened.

After Sherlock's participation had been clarified, the questions asked by the Internal Affairs bloke had been voiced in a neutral tone, but it readily became apparent that Lestrade knew of Donovan's

unprofessional conduct and that it was an ongoing behavior. While he had called her on it multiple times, he had never done more than asked her to stop; he had never filed a reprimand, never sent her to diversity training, basically she never experienced any penalties for continuing to ignore his requests to stop antagonizing Sherlock Holmes.

"Did you approve of her comments," asked Detective Singer dispassionately.

"No, I didn't," replied Lestrade honestly. "But because Sherlock can be incredibly blunt â€" the man has no tact whatsoever â€" I can almost understand the attitude. It doesn't mean it's acceptable, but at least I can empathize somewhat."

Singer looked at his notes. "Do you think he's a risk to himself or others?"

"What?" Lestrade looked shocked and then chagrined as he realized where the question came from. "No! Well, not unless it was unusual circumstances. He did have a drug habit several years ago, but once he knew he couldn't come to a crime scene until he was clean, he straightened himself out, so he's not a risk to himself.

"Now I know that Detective Sergeant Donovan thinks he is a potential murderer, and I will admit that almost everyone has the potential to commit a crime; I've been a police officer too many years to deny that. But Sherlock Holmes is all about solving puzzles and mysteries and ignores the emotional impact of a murder. I think the fact that he focuses on the 'how' instead of the 'what' is one of the reasons Donovan gets so irritated with him. He tends to ignore what he considers sentimentality, unless it's related to a motive."

Singer evaluated the silver-haired Detective Inspector before him. "Do you think Detective Sergeant Donovan should be disciplined?"

Lestrade sighed softly. "She has the potential to grow into a good DI, but frankly, at the moment she is inflexible. Once she makes up her mind, it's almost impossible to change and she doesn't care who knows it. Making her apologize to Sherlock would be pointless, because she wouldn't mean it. I don't know if sensitivity training would be effective. I've thought about transferring her to Birmingham for a year or two, giving her a chance to work with different people, but I don't know how valuable that would be." He looked at the IA Detective and grimaced slightly. "Yes, her behavior does deserve a reprimand. She has been persistently unprofessional and she doesn't regret it. She only regrets being chastised for it." He looked down and then squared his shoulders and lifted his head to meet the other man's eyes. "As I knew of and didn't stop her behavior, I deserve an official reprimand as well."

Singer nodded, stood and offered his hand. "Thank you, Detective Inspective Lestrade. You will be informed of the outcome of the investigation." The two shook hands, and Lestrade left the conference room.

**\*\*Mycroft Holmes\*\*** was having a satisfying week. A terrorist crisis had been averted on the Underground without panicking the public; security had been upgraded and approved at key government

installations; he had been able to delegate an overseas trip to a subordinate; he had purchased a case of particularly fine wine and his younger brother had survived the week intact. That made for an agreeable week.

He browsed the latest surveillance report on his brother again. John Watson was proving to be a most interesting character. He hadn't been intimidated by Mycroft's actions towards him and hadn't been tempted to spy on Sherlock for money. He seemed to tolerate his brother's volatile personality with apparent amusement and an extraordinary amount of patience. Although not charged in the shooting, he was obviously the one responsible for killing the murderous cab driver before his brother was tempted to ingest a poisonous pill. Mycroft made a mental note to back-date authorization for the man to carry a firearm in case of future problems.

What encouraged Mycroft the most was that Watson took his protection of Sherlock down to the verbal abuse his brother frequently experienced. While Sherlock might claim not to be affected by being called a "freak", but he remembered the nearly imperceptible flinches his younger brother gave every time someone bullied him as a teenager. It took quite some time for the younger Holmes to bury the reactions and pretend it didn't wound him.

Mycroft might have believed the former RAMC Captain had been motivated by the insubordination towards DI Lestrade, but he had read the actual complaint. The man seemed livid at the bullying attitude of the Detective Sergeant. As astonishing as it seemed, it appeared that his brother was actually forming a friendship with a good and decent man. It could be the saving of his little brother and he would do everything in his considerable power to ensure that friendship endured. It gave him hope for the future and resulted in a very satisfying week.

**\*\*Sally Donovan\*\*** was having a bad week; a Very Bad week. After Sherlock Holmes intruded on another crime scene shadowed by a total stranger, he had swanned around insulting the hard-working officers of the Met, and then only a day later, he had identified that people were 'suiciding' because they had been forced to choose between two pills under gun point. In addition, the cabbie who held the gun was murdered in the Freak's presence, and no one else seemed to see his involvement in the death. After all of that, Lestrade not only reprimanded her for being unprofessional, but informed her that she was on desk duty until a formal investigation into a complaint filed by the Freak's shadow, one Doctor John Watson.

At least being on desk duty allowed her to investigate the presumptuous Watson. To her chagrin, he actually was a medical doctor; a former surgeon in the RAMC, where he held the rank of Captain until he was discharged. Lestrade said he was a war hero, and the records did seem to document the citations to back that claim up. How such a bland little man became a decorated veteran was beyond her. He probably followed the Freak just to see more death and misery now that he was out of the war.

After Watson chewed her out at the Lauriston Gardens crime scene, she began developing plans to publicly embarrass the man just as much as he had embarrassed her. She had thought about making a few comments to Met gossips about him being an obvious poofster, the bottom to the Freak, but she realized that any comments or actions on her part

would reflect badly on her now. Any retaliation would have to wait.

She also tried to speak to the first PC she saw that had been on duty that night to try to make sure any comments didn't reflect badly on her, but he had already received notice of an upcoming interview. "Sorry Detective Sergeant," he said stiffly. "My notice warned me not to discuss the incident with anyone until after the interview and to tell the Internal Affairs Detective if anyone tried to talk to me." That left her with only being able to say "No problem. I was focused on the murder investigation itself and was hoping to refresh my memory on the incidental details that occurred that night." The man nodded and quickly walked away. She didn't dare try to discuss it again.

Her interview with Detective Singer from IA didn't go well. She thought he would be sympathetic to the spurious complaint, but the man had stayed irritatingly unbiased throughout the interview.

"Tell me about Sherlock Holmes," he asked. She wasn't stupid, regardless of what the Freak thought, and was careful in her response.

"Sherlock Holmes is a white male, approximately thirty years of age, dresses quite posh, unknown form of income," she responded. "He has a history of drug use, primarily cocaine. He identifies himself as a 'consulting detective' and likes toâ€¦" she used air quotes to emphasize her point, "\_assist\_ with murder investigations."

"And does he actually assist," asked Singer, as he typed notes on his laptop, even though there was a digital recorder active. She couldn't see what he wrote as the screen faced away from her.

"Detective Inspector Lestrade believes so. As he is my superior officer, I have to follow his lead." Sally made sure to keep her voice respectful.

"Did Detective Inspector Lestrade tell you that Mr. Holmes would be arriving to assist with the investigation on the night in question?"

Sally frowned slightly. "Yes, he said he had asked him to look over the scene and see if he could make any of his 'deductions'."

"Did you see Mr. Holmes when he arrived?"

"Yes, I escorted him and his 'colleague', another civilian, into the building."

"How did you address Mr. Holmes at that time, Detective Sergeant" asked Singer impassively.

"Did I called him a freak, you mean?" At the IA Detective's dispassionate gaze, she tried not to roll her eyes. "Yes, I did. His typical behavior is abnormal. He doesn't want to be a police officer, but he wants to have the role and privileges of one. He doesn't recognize that a body was once a living person. He ignores the grief and pain in a murder and instead gets excited about having a puzzle to solve. He regularly insults every law officer at a crime scene. So I find his behavior eccentric and offensive."



"Were you ever asked not to insult Mr. Holmes," asked the investigator.

Sally sighed mentally. There were too many witnesses to Lestrade's comments for her to lie believably. "DI Lestrade usually just said my name in his \_'I'm disappointed in you'\_ tone", she hedged. "Holmes himself never commented or objected. In fact, the man insulted us regularly."

"After DI Lestrade objected, did you continue to refer to Mr. Holmes as 'Freak'?"

"Yes," she admitted, but quickly dissembled by adding, "As long as Mr. Holmes didn't complain, how I addressed him didn't seem important."

Singer made a note on his laptop. "What can you tell me about John Watson?"

"He's a white male, mid-thirties, slightly below average height. He was walking with limp and used a cane the night I met him. The Holmes introduced him as his colleague, but didn't give me his name; I learned it later."

"Did you speak with Doctor Watson again that evening?"

Here it came. She had to be careful now. "After Holmes went running off, leaving Watson behind, I tried to caution him about the man."

"What was your reason for cautioning him?"

"Because Watson was a crippled bloke, a small injured man. He looked bewildered when he realized that Holmes had abandoned him, so he obviously didn't know this was common behavior for him. Holmes brought the man to a murder scene and then ran off and left him. If that's not unorthodox, I don't know what is."

Singer typed briefly on the laptop. "You said you cautioned him about Holmes. How did you do that?"

Sally clenched her hand into a fist under the table. Damn, this could get her in trouble, but again there had been too many witnesses to her comments. "I warned him that Holmes got off on murders and that one day, we might be investigating a body that he left."

"At any time in the conversation did you tell Doctor Watson that Mr. Holmes was a psychopath?"

Sally wanted to growl. What was Watson's problem! She had been trying to help him! "I might have. I don't really recall."

"Did you think that any of your comments might be considered slander?"

"Slander implies a deliberate untruth, Detective Singer, and harm to the person's reputation. I was trying to warn a crippled man about associating with someone who was blatantly abnormal and enjoyed murders or at least murder scenes. I was trying to be helpful, but

obviously failed in that effort."

"What are your thoughts about the complaint that Doctor Watson filed?"

Sally's lips twisted in an unamused grimace. "Apparently, he's former army and thought I was guilty of 'gross insubordination' and 'conduct unbecoming an officer'. He has the right to his opinion, of course, even if this isn't the army."

"Is there anything else you would like to say or that you would like me to know regarding this complaint?"

Sally gave her best innocent look to the Detective. "I am a very good Detective Sergeant," she said. "I am well-trained and dedicated to keeping the country safe. I am concerned about victims and their families. I want to continue to do my best and hope a conflict with one individual won't impact that ability."

Singer nodded neutrally, giving her no indication of his thoughts. He stood and shook hands with her. "Thank you for your time, Detective Sergeant Donovan. You will be informed of the outcome of the investigation."

As Sally walked out of the conference room, she knew this wasn't going to turn out well. It was a Very Bad week.

**\*\*Robert Singer\*\*** of NSY Internal Affairs was having an intriguing week. He had the opportunity to meet a real war hero, one Dr. John Watson, who served in Sierra Leone and Afghanistan. His RAMC records listed a variety of citations, including the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross and mentions in dispatches. He had been shot with an armor piercing bullet that ended his surgical career and saw him honorably discharged. Now he was the flat mate and colleague of one Sherlock Holmes, who assisted the Yard with selected inquiries.

Interviews with constables on the crime scene revealed that after Donovan called Holmes "Freak", Holmes had basically accused Donovan and Anderson of having an affair while Anderson's wife was out of town based on them using the same deodorant. What Singer found interesting was that neither of them refuted Holmes conclusions.

Holmes himself was quite the character. Definitely brusque, although he could see why the man was considered a genius. He had identified that Singer was married with two teenaged children, was on a department rugby team, had a new barber, and had a loved one serving in the military overseas. To his surprise, Holmes seemed perplexed by Watson's complaint.

"Yes, Sally calls me a freak and a psychopath and regularly announces that one day I'll be the one creating the bodies," he stated with indifference. "But her opinion of me is irrelevant. As long as she doesn't get in the way of my investigation, I am not particularly concerned what she says."

"Why do you think Doctor Watson filed a complaint then," asked Singer. He was surprised to see several emotions race across the detective's face; wonder was followed by embarrassment and then gratification.

"Because John Watson is a Good Man," Holmes replied seriously. The capitals were apparent in the man's words. "He's sentimental and surprisingly protective. Plus, I think he found Sally's comments not only an insult to me, but to DI Lestrade as well. As a former military man, he doesn't approve of undermining the chain of command."

"Do you agree with the complaint?"

Holmes frowned slightly. "I understand why John disapproved. He wants everyone to abide by pre-established social conventions, even me. He regularly tells me when I have overstepped social norms. However, I perceive Sally's dislike of me as immaterial to my investigation of a case."

"What is your opinion of the Serious Crimes division," asked Singer curiously.

"Most of them are idiots," Holmes replied promptly. "That's not an insult, most people are idiots in general. They see, but they don't observe; they miss so many details. Anderson on the Forensics team is one of the worst for missing obvious details and reaching unsupported conclusions. Lestrade is probably the least idiotic of them. He understands the details once I point them out and takes appropriate action." The detective paused then added, "He's quite tedious about paperwork, though."

"What if an outcome of this complaint is that you were no longer allowed to consult with the Metropolitan Police Service?"

"I would have to find other enigmas to solve," Holmes admitted with a grimace. "That would be inconvenient and boring. There are private inquiries, of course, but I'm not interested in philandering spouses. Dull. I've been asked to assist with some political and government investigations on occasion, but there's always a cost to them." There was a pause and then Holmes muttered quietly, "Mostly in the form of the person who demands my assistance."

"Do you think that Detective Sergeant Donovan should be reprimanded for her behavior," Singer asked.

Holmes frowned as he reflected. "It's immaterial to me." Then he paused for a moment before adding, "John would probably be upset if she wasn't reprimanded as that would imply endorsement of her comments. I don't like John being unhappy." He seemed bewildered by his own statement.

Robert Singer took pity on the man, stood to shake his head and excused him. The man left with a slight billow to his Belstaff coat.

His interview with Doctor John Watson was interesting. Where Sherlock Holmes was intense and blunt, Watson was respectful and courteous. However, there was a touch of steel visible in the man's blue eyes. He carried himself with military precision, but the cane that had been previously identified didn't make an appearance and the Detective saw no evidence of him being crippled.

At Singer's request, Watson gave a succinct summary of what occurred

that night that led to his complaint. The IA Detective could see his military background in the report; it contained the only the facts.

"Tell me, Doctor Watson," Singer questioned, "what do you want to see happen as a result of this complaint?"

"I would like to see more professional behavior from Detective Sergeant Donovan," promptly responded Watson. "I don't expect everyone to like Sherlock Holmes â€" the man can be beyond annoying â€" but he should be called on his attitude when it happens. He shouldn't have to answer to "Freak" as though it's his name. And an officer in NSY shouldn't accuse him of being an up-and-coming murderer to someone she's known for a handful of minutes."

"What about Detective Inspector Lestrade? He's her superior," asked Singer curiously.

Watson paused a brief moment. "Every superior is responsible for those under his or her command," he said calmly. "Lestrade does understand Sherlock and cuts him quite a bit of slack just because he is so brilliant. I think he cut Donovan the same slack because he was trying to balance respecting his team and bringing in an outsider who intruded on their territory." Watson looked Singer in the eye as he added, "It should be noted that he wasn't present for specific interactions in the complaint. Anything beyond my complaint is up to the discretion of his commanding officer."

After several more questions, Singer shook hands with the doctor and watched him march away. The Detective sat down in the conference room to review his notes.

Witnesses and Sergeant Donovan herself confirmed that the complaint was accurate. She did call Holmes a "freak"; she did ignore her boss's request to curb her behavior; she did describe Holmes as a psychopath and potential murderer to someone she had only met an hour before. Yes, Holmes was brusque with poor manners and no tact; that was indisputable. However, her comments indicated no remorse for her actions.

Interestingly, Holmes himself didn't appear to care that Donovan abused him. Singer didn't think Holmes perceived her behavior as anything more irritating than a mosquito's whine. DI Lestrade had earned Singer's respect. He recognized his team member's problem and accepted his own culpability in not reining her in. Lastly, Watson's account was clear and concise; he honestly seemed bothered by what he perceived as inappropriate or "wrong" behavior. There was no hidden agenda with his complaint.

Singer finished his report and closed the laptop for the day, glad that the week was at an end. Now the final judgement and resolution was up to his superiors. He was looking forward to going home to a family dinner after this very intriguing week.

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**\*\*Author's Note: \*\***Although the story is now complete, I've been asked about the resolution of the investigation. I see an official reprimand being given to Sally with mandatory sensitivity training. I don't expect that Sally will do much more than give lip service to

the training, and will be frigidly polite to Sherlock and John, while seething inside, waiting until she can retaliate safely. Lestrade would get away with a verbal warning (aka chewing out). A minor government official just might find a way to have Donovan transferred to a rural location if she tries anything else...

End  
file.